BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW

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Your Community Partner

Building a Better Tomorrow 2000

Over the past two years, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has undergone a marked transformation in the way it conducts business — it is no longer business as usual at HUD. This change required a fundamental paradigm shift, which was dramatic for many. We dared to step forward and make a personal commitment to restoring the public trust by demonstrating competence in the way we deliver services. We recognized that our responsibility is to help people empower themselves.

Our successes have been many. We have forged partnerships with local governments, communities and the private sector — something never before heard of in government affairs. We have lifted communities to a higher level through grassroots actions by empowering communities and individuals. And, through the restructuring of field organizations to include community empowerment teams, we are setting a foundation to develop and perpetuate a unified, one-HUD approach to meeting community needs. All this in only the second year of

HUD 2020 Management Reform. Just imagine what the next 20 years will bring, if we can achieve so much in only two years.

Even though our traditional goals remain the same — fighting for fair housing, increasing affordable housing and homeownership, reducing homelessness, promoting jobs

Mary Lou Crane,
Secretary's
Representative
New England

Effective Techniques of Top Performers!

Burlington Coalition Helps the Homeless Find Homes

Like many cities across the nation, Burlington, VT, must wrestle with two distinct but related issues: homelessness and insufficient vacant housing. The Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) and Community On Temporary Shelter (COTS), a nonprofit organization, have formed a coalition to develop a viable solution to this dilemma.

Currently, less than one percent of the housing in Burlington is vacant and affordable. Under the leadership of Janet Silverstein, COTS and BHA staff have developed a joint homelessness-to-home transition program. The program includes

a number of components. One is a communal voice mailbox service, which potential landlords can use to post rental information that individuals and families can access with ease. HUD Section 8 vouchers are another feature, as are case-management services administered by Burlington's Social Services Mental Health, Domestic Violence and Drug Abuse units. The ongoing case-management services help to alleviate concerns that landlords have regarding participation in the program.

To date, the homeless-to-home transition program, which is part of the Burlington Continuum of Care, has proved to be very successful. Through a community-wide effort, individuals, couples and families
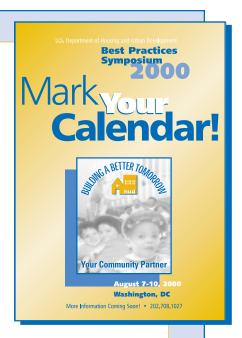
have been able to secure housing despite a consistently tight housing market. During a one-year period, 79 individuals and 70 families located affordable and vacant housing. The public, including potential landlords, is kept informed through an aggressive media campaign that includes an open house and television coverage.

The success of the program illustrates the value of collaborative efforts within a community to solve housing problems. Armed with the knowledge and resources developed through the coalition, some 145 individuals, couples and families in Burlington now have a home or apartment to call their own. ◆

On February 3, 2000 HUD began hosting a series of Best Practices Focus Group sessions. These sessions bring together industry practitioners, management and other experts from housing program areas, along with HUD Best Practices Team members, to develop and refine models by which best practices can be identified, categorized, and utilized. There are two sides to the model equation that the Best Practices Team is addressing. The focus groups deal with the framework of the "What" side: What are the strategic objectives and key performance indicators; what are the critical success factors and major barriers to success; what are the desired results or outcomes of success? Individually and in total, these define what best practices are needed for. From them flow the second side of the model, the "How." It is the best practices themselves that will populate the "How" side: How success is achieved, how barriers are overcome, how outcomes are measured and reviewed for continuous improvement, etc. The Focus Group sessions are, of course, not the only source of the "What," but they are a vital, necessary part in order to both identify the most relevant best practices, and most important of all be able to leverage them wherever practical for the most benefit of everyone.

A secondary, but also important, objective of these Focus Group sessions is to solicit input from the industry on "areas of need" within HUD programs for the provision of technical assistance. The information received on technical assistance will be used to develop high-value workshops for the 2000 Best Practices Symposium.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Best Practices Symposium 2000

Mark Your Calendar!

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August 7-10, 2000
Washington, DC
More Information Coming Soon! • 202.708.1027

BEST PRACTICES FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Native American Programs .... May 11, 2000
Community Development... May 18, 2000
Special Needs Housing... May 25, 2000
Rental Production (Hope VI, CDBG, HOME) .... June 1, 2000
Youth Development .... June 8, 2000
Resident Services .... June 15, 2000
Rental Assistance/Section 8 .... June 22, 2000
Homeowner Rehabilitation.. June 29, 2000

For more information, contact Neil Brown or Mary Barry on 202/708-1027.

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and economic opportunity, empowering people and communities and restoring the public trust — the primary emphasis has shifted away from HUD central, focusing instead on those working in the communities.

EMPOWERMENT

No longer are directives issued to communities, but rather a bottom-up, community-driven management style has been implemented to empower communities and individuals. By providing tools to implement revitalization strategies through various methodologies, we have empowered groups to find the best solutions for their needs — after all, no two communities are alike and no one solution will work for all. It is the partnership efforts of communities, private sector and governments working together that builds strength and helps communities to move forward.

RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST

By consolidating and reorganizing programs, HUD has been able to more efficiently meet the needs of its constituents. In communities across the country, funds have been used to effectively empower individuals — and thus these efforts have begun to restore the public trust.

Community partnerships are an investment in the future that will build a better tomorrow for everyone.

BEST PRACTICES

Through the "Best Practices" initiative, we showcase the practices that are models of success in empowerment and building trust, as well as in the other areas important to HUD. Because of the success of the Best Practices initiative, HUD can now document true successes in the industry that can be used as prototypes for others.

Best practices is an ideal information tool for distributing ideas that work to others across the country.

But, it doesn't end with those practices that have been started and emulated thus far. Your successes will continue to be showcased and replicated through the Best Practices 2000 initiative. By sharing your successes with others, your legacy lives on and everyone benefits from your best practices. ◆

2000 Best Practices Nomination Process

Submitting a Best Practice has never been easier. Now HUD staff, partners and other outside organizations can submit Best Practices nominations using HUD's internet site. The 2000 Best Practices nominations process opened on March 20, 2000 and runs through May 31, 2000. You may access the automated nomination system at http://www.hud.gov/bestpractices/bpnom.html.

REVAMPED NOMINATION PROCESS

HUD has improved the process for nominating Best Practices by allowing electronic submissions. The new and improved Best Practices database collects more information, tracks the nominations throughout the review process and provides valuable information on Best Practices across the country.

BEST PRACTICES

A Best Practice must be replicable in other areas of the country, region, or local jurisdiction and generate a significant and demonstrable positive impact on those being served or managed. The nomination must also demonstrate at least one of the following characteristics:

- Effective use of partnerships among government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses;

- Creative problem solving;

- Overcoming serious obstacles to program implementation; or,

- Demonstrating efficiencies achieved (i.e., saving time and resources).

Special consideration will be given to those projects or programs that either:

- Address two or more of HUD's six Strategic Goals within the same project or effort. HUD's six Strategic Goals are: 1) fighting for fair housing; 2) increasing affordable housing and homeownership; 3) reducing homelessness; 4) promoting jobs and economic opportunity; 5) empowering people and communities; and 6) restoring public trust.

- Use newly developed concepts, technology and/or resources to significantly improve the delivery of housing and community development services, or

- Demonstrate the effective use of multiple HUD programs and resources, as well as private resources, to significantly improve the quality of life throughout the community.

2000 FOCUS

The 2000 Best Practices initiative is a showcase to demonstrate how HUD programs work and provide technical assistance to those in need. HUD staff are being asked to identify nearly 1,500 Best Practices as a result of their monitoring and compliance efforts. The remainder will be nominated based on staff knowledge of Best Practices that should be recognized and replicated across the country. Outside partners, industry groups and individuals also may nominate programs/projects for replication. This will give the Department a wealth of programs and projects that can show how communities across the nation can improve their overall performance and results.

Given this ambitious effort, you should begin submitting your Best Practice nominations for consideration now. Go to HUD's web site and send us your nominations for review. ◆

Best Practices 2000

Yes, I would like to be placed on the Building A Better Tomorrow, HUD's Best Practices and Technical Assistance Forum newsletter mailing list. (Please print) Send form to the address below or call the Best Practices HELP Desk number.

Name: _____

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Building A Better Tomorrow

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Would You Like To Contribute An Article?

If so please contact our Newsletter Editor at the number listed on the right.

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